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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/57/L.20/Rev.1 and Add.1)*]

57/160. The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming all its relevant resolutions in which it stresses the importance of international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, aimed at promoting economic and social development in the region with a view to furthering and supplementing the efforts of the Central American peoples and Governments to consolidate peace and democracy,

Reaffirming also its resolution 52/169 G of 16 December 1997, concerning international assistance to and cooperation with the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America, and the relevant resolutions concerning emergency assistance to the Central American countries as a consequence of the destruction caused by natural disasters,

Taking note of the peaceful and orderly elections held during the past year in Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua, and emphasizing the existence throughout Central America of freely elected Governments, indicating the achievement of political, economic and social changes that are creating a climate conducive to the promotion of economic growth and advancement towards the consolidation and further development of democratic, just and equitable societies,

Emphasizing the importance of the Central American Integration System, the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America, the establishment of the subsystem and of the regional social policy, the model of democratic Central American security, and the implementation of other agreements adopted at the presidential summit meetings,

Recognizing that the consolidation of peace and democracy in Central America is the outcome of a long and arduous process in which obstacles have been encountered but are being overcome through the efforts of the peoples and Governments of the region aimed at continuing progress in the strengthening of peace and democratic institutions,

Noting that in 2002, on the tenth anniversary of the signature of the El Salvador peace agreements, additional steps have been taken towards the

successful implementation of the commitments, enabling the completion of the verification work entrusted to the Secretary-General,

Noting with concern that the progress achieved in previous years in the fulfilment of the commitments contained in the Guatemala peace agreements has not maintained the same momentum during the period 2001–2002 and in some aspects has even been reversed,

Recognizing the establishment of offices of human rights defenders throughout Central America and the progress achieved in the field of human rights, which is being supported by public education campaigns to highlight both the responsibilities of States in the field of human rights and the rights and responsibilities of citizens,

Noting with concern the deterioration in the Central American economies, due, inter alia, to an unfavourable international economic climate and the fall in exports, as well as the adverse effects on the efforts of the peoples and Governments of the region to achieve sustainable economic development, and underlining the need for economic reforms,

Noting with concern also that Central America is highly vulnerable to natural disasters and that some countries have not yet been able to overcome the devastating effects of hurricanes Mitch, Keith and Michelle, the earthquakes in El Salvador in January 2001 and the drought that afflicted the entire region in 2001,

Noting that the natural disasters have proved the relevance of environmentally responsible economic and development policies and the need for the Central American nations to consider environmental aspects among all their development objectives,

Bearing in mind the efforts made by the Central American Governments to reduce the risks and mitigate the consequences of the natural disasters in the region, including the adoption of the Strategic Framework for the Reduction of Vulnerability and Disasters in Central America and the Central American Five-Year Plan for the Reduction of Vulnerability to and the Impact of Disasters, 2000 to 2004,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central America;[1]

2. *Commends* the efforts of the peoples and the Governments of the Central American countries to consolidate peace and democracy and promote sustainable development by implementing the commitments adopted at the summit meetings in the region;

3. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the firm determination shown by the Central American Governments to resolve their differences peacefully, thereby avoiding any setback in efforts to consolidate peace, further the process of Central American integration and guarantee the sustainable development of the region;

4. *Urges* the Central American nations to continue to work together to resolve border issues for the greater good of the region and its inhabitants;

5. *Draws attention* to the convening of the Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons in Central America: Control and Regulation of Weapons Transfers in Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action, held in San José from 3 to 5 December 2001, and welcomes the adoption of a plan of activities

[1] A/57/384 and Add.1.

recommended for the national and regional implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects;[2]

6. *Recognizes* the importance of the process of Central American integration, and urges Member States to continue combining efforts to adapt, strengthen and promote even further the Central American integration process, especially in economic, social, cultural and tourism fields, and recalling the Declaration regarding a South American Zone of Peace and Cooperation,[3] appeals to the international community to continue supporting that process in order to contribute to the peace, security and sustainable development of the region;

7. *Reaffirms* the importance of the Puebla-Panama Plan as a means of promoting the economic and social development of the Mesoamerican region, recognizes in that connection the process made in implementing the Plan, and invites the friendly countries of the Mesoamerican region, international agencies and international businessmen and investors to support the Mesoamerican countries in the implementation of the projects prioritized in the Plan;

8. *Welcomes* the Mérida Joint Declaration adopted on 28 June 2002 at the Fifth Summit of the Tuxtla Mechanism for Dialogue and Coordination, in which the heads of State and Government of Central America and Mexico expressed their firm commitment to promote deep regional integration through the consolidation of a community of Mesoamerican nations;

9. *Recognizes* the importance of the Conference on Information and Communications Technology and Electronic Government for Regional Development and Integration for Central America, convened at Tegucigalpa on 20 November 2002, and, with a view to garnering greater support, requests the United Nations Secretariat to continue rendering support in the areas of information and communications technology and electronic government for the regional development of Central America;

10. *Reiterates* the importance of negotiating trade agreements between the region and its counterparts outside the region with a view to promoting the sustainability of the economic development of the region;

11. *Calls upon* the Central American Governments to continue to fulfil the commitments they have assumed under national, regional and international agreements with a view to enhancing governance in the region, especially in the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of social programmes designed to overcome poverty and unemployment, improve public safety, strengthen the judiciary, consolidate a modern and transparent public administration and eliminate corruption;

12. *Urges* the Central American Governments to redouble their efforts to combat common crime and transnational organized crime with a view to providing greater security for inhabitants and their property, within a framework of full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

13. *Recognizes* the progress achieved in the consolidation of a Mesoamerican biological corridor as a system of territorial classification, comprising natural areas

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[2] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9–20 July 2001* (A/CONF.192/15), chap. IV.

[3] See A/57/232, annex, enclosure.

under special administrative regimes, multi-use areas and interconnecting areas in order to contribute to improving the quality of life of the inhabitants of the region;

14. *Reiterates its appreciation* to the people and the Government of El Salvador for their efforts in fulfilling the commitments set forth in the peace agreements, and expresses its profound thanks to the Secretary-General for the commendable way in which he has carried out the verification work entrusted to him, and to the international community for the support it has rendered in order to achieve the objectives of the peace process in El Salvador;

15. *Urges* all Guatemalans, and in particular the Government of Guatemala, to give renewed impetus to the fulfilment of the commitments contained in the peace agreements, in the context of reprogramming for the period 2001–2004, and to the understanding reached during the meeting of the Consultative Group for Guatemala, organized by the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C., on 11 and 12 February 2002;

16. *Reiterates* the need to implement fully the commitments set forth in the Guatemala peace agreements, in particular the recommendations of the Commission for Historical Clarification,[4] and urges all sectors of society to combine efforts and to work with determination to consolidate peace;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, the relevant bodies and programmes of the United Nations system and the international community to continue to support and verify the implementation of the Guatemala peace agreements signed under United Nations auspices, and to consider the implementation of the peace agreements as the framework for their technical and financial assistance programmes and projects in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Guatemala;

18. *Recognizes* the need to continue to follow closely the situation in Central America in support of national and regional efforts to overcome the underlying causes that have led to armed conflicts, avoid setbacks and consolidate peace and democracy in the region, as well as promote the objectives of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America;

19. *Commends* the efforts and actions undertaken by the present Government of Nicaragua to combat the scourge of corruption, which threatens to undermine the legitimacy of public institutions in that country, and urges it to continue its actions until that evil has been eradicated, thereby strengthening confidence in the rule of law and the belief of the Nicaraguan people in democracy;

20. *Reaffirms* the importance of international cooperation, in particular cooperation with the bodies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and the donor community in the consolidation of democracy and sustainable development in Central America, and urges them to continue to support Central American efforts to achieve those objectives;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to lend his fullest support to the initiatives and activities of the Central American Governments, in particular their efforts to consolidate democracy through the promotion of integration and the implementation of the comprehensive sustainable development programme, emphasizing, inter alia, the potential repercussions of natural disasters on the

[4] See A/53/928, annex.

vulnerable economies and political systems of the region, and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

22. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session an item entitled "The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development".

76th plenary meeting
16 December 2002